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The Church School Teacher

ume XXI APRIL 1952 Number 4

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MAGAZINE FOR CHURCH SCHOOL WORKERS

THE CHURCH SCHOOL TEACHER

VOLUME XXI No.4

APRIL 1952

LAEL H. WESTBERG

Editor

RAYMOND A. VOGELEY
C. E. LINDER
PAUL M. LINDBERG
EVELYN STARK

Editorial Advisory Committee

COVER:

Parish Education Display at Lutheran Evangelism Conference, Minneapolis, January 23-27.

Photo by Augustana Audio-Visual Service.

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The Church School Teacher

Vol. XXI APRIL 1952 No. 4

From Your Director

By L. H. WESTBERG
Augustana Lutheran Church

FOR most parents these are uneasy days. The difference between what *should be* in the home and what actually *is* disturbs the conscientious parent. And the helplessness many parents feel when they try to resolve the difference is frustrating. Church school workers should keep this in mind when they set out to get home participation in the parish education program.

The outside pressures and demands upon the average home and the limitations of time make controlled scheduling almost impossible. A family decides, for example, to have its devotions after the evening meal. But the insistence of a ringing telephone breaks down the practice. It tries another evening hour and finds only a small portion of the family can attend. Father has an evening appointment, Mary is baby sitting, George is at Luther League. It switches to the early morning and the time between rising and leave-taking seems to diminish daily. The family worship becomes a perfunctory ritual.

The Candle of the Lord

The primary responsibility of the parent for the Christian education of the family is a subject often treated in essay and speech. Christian parents are uncomfortably aware of their duty. The responsibility, however, is beyond many of them. This by no means should discourage either church school worker or parent. Our Lord wants our families and can help us. "The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord," says the writer of the Book of Proverbs. We *can* be lighted, down to the very end of the candle.

Parents and church school workers must use opportunities, therefore, to get together. Some

parents have gone farther than others in creating the Christian atmosphere in the home. They will often be the Lord's quiet spokesmen to light other parents' candles. The discussion of common problems, the sharing of solutions, the resolution of parents to let Christ work again in themselves and in their families, the realization of the help that the church school teaching material affords—these can change the direction for many families.

Need Training

Parent-teachers meetings frequently are innocuous. But when they are gatherings in the spirit of Christ, He is in their midst. The meetings must be purposeful therefore, and well planned. They must have content. They must be built with the realization that parents need training.

Material for Training

This past year the Augustana Board of Parish Education has been participating with a group of other denominations in developing material for such parent meetings. The Rev. Raymond C. Swanson of Flint, Michigan, has been Augustana's representative in this work. The group has produced four sound filmstrips with recorded script which can be used in the education of parents. The filmstrips may be purchased or borrowed from the Board of Parish Education by writing Audio-Visual Service, 2445 Park Ave., Minneapolis 4, Minn.

These filmstrips are not entertainment. They are serious approaches to the problems facing parents.

Filmstrips

No Easy Answer, for example, presents several emergency or crisis situations. After the situations are presented in picture and sound, the parent group discusses possible solutions. Following this discussion the filmstrip is resumed and the solutions of the families in the situations are given. The parent group then discusses and evaluates these decisions.

Built Upon a Rock assists parents to use community and church resources to cope with the tensions in family living resulting from today's outside pressures.

For the Record is a story showing the responsibilities and possibilities facing parents as teachers of religion.

A Harvest from Holidays shows how parents may use both special

occasions and ordinary family situations for the enrichment of Christian family experience.

May 4-11

National Family Week, the week preceding and ending with Mother's Day, is a good time to get some renewed action for parent-teacher gatherings. A good program which uses one of the family life audio visuals would be effective.

It should be understood, however, that the filmstrips can not be used effectively without careful planning and group discussion of the problems raised afterwards. They are prepared to be part of a program, not an entire program. A utilization guide accompanies each script.

Audio-Visual Catalog

Your Board of Parish Education and your Conference Commission on Parish Education are making many audio-visual aids available for your use. In addition, other departments of the Church are producing or securing helpful filmstrips and motion-picture films.

The Augustana Audio-Visual Service has distributed to all pastors a catalog of audio-visual materials available to congregations and church groups.

This catalog is at your pastor's office and Audio-Visual Service has asked him to make this catalog available to the officers and teachers of the church school. One catalog will serve all departments of your church.

Ask Your Pastor

The 54-page catalog lists approximately 200 religious 16mm films and 35mm filmstrips available to churches. Each listing includes a brief review of the material together with the service charge.

Ask your pastor to let you see the catalog.

Among filmstrips recently placed in the Audio-Visual Library by the Board of Parish Education are five copies of a two-part "Life of Christ" produced by the Evangelical and Reformed Church. This is one of the finest strips we have seen. It is done in color from originals painted by a contemporary artist.

Two Scripts

The strips have two accompanying scripts, one for children and one for adults. The two parts may be purchased for $10.00, a very

modest price for such excellent strips. Sunday schools should own these filmstrips.

And in Conclusion

If you are interested in statistics, here are some released by the World Council of Christian Education. As of 1950 the United States had an area of 2,977,128 square miles; a population of 150,404,476 (estimate); a total evangelical Christian community of 76,000,000 persons; 201,085 Sunday schools; 2,243,330 teachers; 22,616,912 scholars.

The faculty of Garrett Biblical Institute has prepared an analysis of Christianity and Communism. It is called just that, *Christianity and Communism, An Analysis.* It is a statement resulting from months of study and discussion by members of the Garrett faculty, and can provide a basis for enlightening discussions. Copies may be secured by writing Professor Murray H. Leiffer, Garrett Biblical Institute, Evanston, Illinois. The price quoted is five cents per copy, with reductions when more than fifteen copies are purchased.

In This Issue

By THE EDITOR

THIS ISSUE is about Family Week, May 4-11. If something is done about it in your church, it will very likely come about because you, your pastor, and your superintendent sense the importance of strengthening the family, and take advantage of National Family Week.

To get you fired up is the aim of this issue. So we take you to a testimonial meeting. When you listen to these testimonials, I beg you, please do not say, "It won't work in our congregation," or, "I'm just too tired." Instead say, "I'm getting enthusiastic. Let's get started."

U. M. T.

As I am writing this, the Universal Military Training bill is being debated in Congress. The persistence of a small group of people has been trying continually to foist U. M. T. upon our country. So far they have not succeeded. We must not permit them to succeed now.

Let your congressman know how you feel about U. M. T. before it is too late.

From Your Director

By R. A. VOGELEY
American Lutheran Church

YOU are beginning to plan for Mother's Day and National Family Week. We hope you will stress the importance of family worship and of the daily religious life of the family at home. If you have not used the film strip, "At Home with God," why not use it at a family-night gathering and then demonstrate family worship.

Family-Life Audio-Visuals

When meeting with our District Committee members, I showed several of the four Family-Life Audio-Visuals. This is an interdenominational project in which we Lutherans have shared, as in the Leadership Kit. You have read something about the four family-life filmstrips in a previous issue of THE CHURCH SCHOOL TEACHER. Each filmstrip serves a definite purpose and can be used in various ways. You may purchase the four as a kit for $35.00, plus postage. Each one as a unit costs $10.00, plus postage. The four units are: "No Easy Answer," "Built upon the Rock," "For the Record," and "A Harvest from Holidays."

Parents Classes in Sunday School

For a long time we have been talking about special classes for parents in the Sunday school. Quite a number of our churches have such classes in which are discussed many phases of Christian home life. Incidentally, the four family-life audio-visuals could well be used in such a class.

We are now suggesting a plan of having a Parents Class for those who have children in the Nursery and Beginners classes. This is a possible lesson series. Use the International Lessons for two-thirds of the class time. Then divide the class into two smaller groups, the parents who have children in the Nursery class and the parents who have children in the Beginners class. Let each group use the Parents Guides, and plan together what they can do during the week at home to share in the Christian nurture of their children.

The International Lessons for the next year can well be applied in this way. In the International Uniform Series are quarters on

"The Ten Commandments and Teachings of Jesus," "The Rise of the Kingdom," and "Matthew, Gospel of the Christian Life." These are the lessons for the next four quarters.

Sunday School Lessons This Summer

The summer *Intermediate Christian Growth* lessons are on "My Church at Work." Perhaps your Intermediate Department would like to have several special presentations of these lessons for the entire Sunday school.

Dr. Linder has stated how practical and timely the International Lessons on "The Rise of the Kingdom" are in this important election year. Many of the lessons emphasize the qualities of leadership which God can approve and the spiritual life of the nation whose God is the Lord.

Church Workers' Institutes

For the first time it will be possible for teachers and prospective teachers, Sunday school officers, and Education Committee members throughout the American Lutheran Church to attend a Church Workers' Institute. Five day Institutes will be held at

Seguin, Texas. June 1-6.
Dubuque, Iowa. June 15-20.
Clintonville, Wis. July 6-11.
Columbus, Ohio. July 13-18.
San Dimas, Calif. July 27-Aug. 1.
Ellensburg, Wash. Aug. 3-8.
Onamia, Minn. Aug. 17-22.

Five three day conference district institutes will be held in the Central District during the week of July 20-25. Zone institutes will also be held in the Iowa District, but the dates have not yet been announced.

Your District Parish Education Committee will give you more detailed information about the departmental courses which will be conducted at these institutes. In practically every institute there will be a Bible-study course based on 2 Timothy. If you plan to attend the institute, read 2 Timothy repeatedly in advance. There will also be a course on Sunday school evangelism, which will offer practical help and suggestions. We hope that many of you will be able to attend a Church Workers' Institute this summer.

Next month we will tell you more about the new features of our Vacation School Lessons, "Beautiful Saviour," and Bible Study Week, which begins September 28, 1952.

Chico Mission

A special word of thanks to all the pastors, superintendents, and teachers who so effectively aroused the interest and support of our Sunday school members in the Chico Mission. Chico is probably one of the best known names of all the mission packages.

As you have read in the *Lutheran Standard* the offering amounted to $81,651.78. Since approximately $53,000 was allocated to Chico, an excellent start has been made on the mission to be located in Chicago. A start? Why, it is more than half paid for already. That is why we are hoping for *three* Sunday School Mission Packages in two years. With the same excellent work on the part of all the pastors, superintendents, and teachers, there will be Sunday School Mission Packages from coast to coast.

For a Happy Christian Home

O Loving Father, bless our home,
That we may all be happy in Thy love,
And in our love for each other.
Make us loyal and generous,
Ready to help and quick to forgive.
May Jesus, Thy Son, be our loved and honored Guest,
Sharing our joys and comforting our sorrows.
May Thy loving Spirit rule our hearts and lips by the law of kindness.

O Loving Father,
Make us all Thy true and happy children,
And fill this house
With gladness of Thy presence.

Contributed by Dr. Clifford Ansgar Nelson

High Priority

By ELMORE F. CARLSON
Pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church, Nampa, Idaho

NATIONAL FAMILY WEEK can, and should, become one of the most important observances of every Lutheran Church. Apart from the great historic church festivals, there are few, if any, nationally observed weeks which should be given any higher priority.

In spite of all the wishful thinking of many persons, we are still confronted with the fact that family life in America is not what it should be. We are informed by authorities that the home life in our nation is rapidly disintegrating. Those functions which previously were a vital part of family life, viz., economic, educational, recreational, protective, and affectional, have been taken over largely by community or commercial enterprises. Even in the realm of Christian education the work has been given over almost exclusively to Sunday school teachers and the pastors. We often forget that Luther wrote the *Catechism* for the purpose of religious instruction in the home.

Dr. Nels Farre in his latest book, *Strengthening the Spiritual Life,* significantly points out that "the family is the seat of our basic troubles and the source of our noblest hopes." As a home mission congregation, we of Trinity Lutheran have recognized the direct relationship between the strength of the home and the strength of the local church. Our best supporters are usually from homes where Christianity is a family matter. Christianity is an appeal to personal decision, and thus there are those who stand alone in their family as the sole witness for Christ. Even their witness would be greatly enhanced if the whole family were Christian.

Two Sunday Emphasis

Last year with our advanced publicity went an appeal to make the first and last Sundays of *National Family Week* "Family Sundays" at both church school and morning worship. Our purpose was threefold: to better acquaint the parents with the program of the church school, to help them experience through worship a greater sense of unity as a family, and to encourage parents to enroll

in the adult Bible class. By stressing the two Sundays we felt that a sense of continuity would be realized, and that it would aid the irregular attenders, to establish the habit.

Certainly Justified

It would seem at first sight that after the first Sunday, enthusiasm for the second would lag. However, with Mother's Day coming at the close of *National Family Week,* it is a natural for larger-than-average attendance. Furthermore, the second Sunday in May last year was also Pentecost, Confirmation Day at Trinity. These two festive events tied in extremely well with our program, and aided us in realizing our objectives. At the time of this observance we had a communicant membership of 106. The first Sunday 129 persons attended and 178 the second. The Church Council agreed that the two-Sunday observance was certainly justified.

Satisfying Results

Other activities which completed Trinity's *National Family Week* program consisted of a special program at Luther League which centered around a discussion of "Youth in the Home," and the public examination of the catechumens. The latter gave an excellent opportunity for stressing the importance of Christian education in the home. Although our overall program was not very large it did have its satisfying results. Some parents who previously *sent* their children to church school, themselves have enrolled in the adult Bible class. One visiting pastor last summer remarked, "You seem to have a Family Sunday School." That was our objective at Trinity.

Usual Response

The response to materials mailed out was about as usual. No effort was made to find out how many used it, but a few remarked how they especially enjoyed the pamphlet, "Pages of Power," and were aided by it. If you see one robin in the spring you may be certain there are others around.

The tempo and temperament of our age compels us to bring about a resurgence of the family, both in its relation to our survival as a nation and to the building of a better and stronger church militant. The modern opinion is that what most people need is not a home but a garage.

In setting up our programs for

National Family Week this year it is necessary to be aware of the problems which confront us and those circumstances which threaten our family life. Then we must set out to give solutions to them in a practical way, being careful not to cram too much into one week lest we spread ourselves too thin and not accomplish our objectives. It is well to have one or two primary objectives in mind as you plan. And always remember that to have a successful observance in your church there must be plenty of *prayer, planning* and *publicity*.

Lutheran World Action

The first Sunday in *National Family Week* this year is also *Lutheran World Action Sunday*. Here is an opportunity to stress such themes as "The Christian Family Shares," or "Our Family and Others." Urge attendance by families at both the church school and morning worship. Suggested materials for family devotions should be made available at the outset. Other features of the week may include: an open forum discussion by the Luther Leaguers on some phase of the youth in the home; a Family Night could be held which would be informal and social in nature. Plan it in such a way that it will appeal to all age groups. If you have a Couples Club, a well-qualified guest speaker could present such topics for discussion as "Our Children's Parents," "Dual-Income Families," and "Authority in the Home."

Stay at Home Night

A Stay at Home Night is certainly needed as part of a well rounded program. It is well to suggest home activities. If there are a number of eligibles in the church, one session on "Marriage Matters Much" would be worth while. One activity during the week could be a Parent Teacher's Night. The week could also be observed as a Home Visitation Week by the church school teachers. I think it is particularly important to make the church school hours on Mother's Day another opportunity for family participation. Make it a day for enrolling new children in the Sunday school and parents in the Bible classes. Then climax the week's observance with the Sunday morning worship, using whatever methods you may choose to employ to bring attention to bear upon the place of the family in the program of the church.

Always remember that the purpose of any special effort within

the church is for the purpose of *evangelizing.* With this as our primary motive for observing *National Family Week* we will find family life deeply enriched, our nation made more secure, our Church strengthened, and our Christ glorified.

Getting Results Through a Parents' Council

By H. W. BLASHFIELD
Chairman of the Board of Christian Education, Mayflower Congregational Church, Minneapolis

Some time ago Dr. Blashfield, district manager of John Rudin & Co., publishers of "The Book of Life," called on me. Our conversation soon got to National Family Week, and that led to Dr. Blashfield's story about his church's Parents' Council. "Would he write it up for THE CHURCH SCHOOL TEACHER?" *I asked him. And here you have it.*

"HOW can we help our parents to work more closely with the teachers of our church school?" was the problem facing the members of the church Board of Christian Education. Many of the parents had never had the curriculum explained to them and appeared to be uninterested. It seemed necessary to start something which might help parents to know more about the content and purpose of the lessons, and to bring them into a closer co-operative effort with the teachers. The answer seemed to be in a *parents' council.*

A dinner meeting of all the parents of the church school was called. The chairman of the Board of Christian Education presented the problem, and explained the possibilities of a parents' council. There was a period of interesting discussion, after which the decision to establish a council was voted. The parents were then divided into groups according to the departments of the school. Those having children in several departments decided upon the group each would attend.

Each departmental group elected two persons to represent the group on the council to be formed. After this election had taken place, the

representatives of the various groups met for organization while the rest of the parents had some entertainment. The Council elected a chairman, vice chairman, secretary and treasurer, and decided upon its first meeting date. Some time was given to a discussion of the possible work of such an organization. The Council members then joined the other parents and announced the new officers.

Activities Increasing

The Parents' Council is now in its second year and the chairman has become an advisory member of the Board of Christian Education.

At the end of the first year, the members felt that at least half of those who had served should remain on the Council for a second year. Those who had to be relieved of the responsibility were allowed to do so. At a meeting of parents, the Council presented a slate of members for the new year. These were elected by ballot. The program of activities is naturally growing as the Council feels its way along. The members are a pioneering group. They have no set pattern, and did not know at the beginning what other churches were doing in this particular field of work. They are seeking to meet the various needs in their own group and church as they discover them.

One of the chief activities has been a quarterly meeting of all parents and teachers of the school for the purpose of acquainting them with the nature of the lessons for the coming quarter and the possibilities for co-operation between teachers and parents. These previews by departments have been preceded by devotions and a speaker or a panel discussion on some phase of home-school training of the children. Recently this plan has been changed. Because many parents have children in more than one department it has been found helpful to have the superintendent of each department present the lessons for the coming quarter. This seems to give a better over-all picture of the entire curriculum plan.

A family night at least twice each year is being promoted by the Council. This begins with a dinner followed by entertainment especially interesting to the younger boys and girls. Several very fine movies have been shown. The ministers of the church have an important place on these eve-

nings in engineering some of the fun during and after the dinner.

Class Parents

Another important feature of the work being done by the Parents' Council is the strengthening of the teaching work of the school. A "class parent" has been provided for each of the fifty classes in the school, who assists the teacher in both the work on Sunday and helps in furthering weekday activities. Sometimes these "class parents" teach the class when the teacher has to be absent.

Also to aid the teachers, the Council has improved the worship centers, secured equipment for showing movies and slides, and has done carpenter work needed in classrooms.

A List of Prospective Teachers

A very recent service of the Parents' Council has been the development of a list of prospective teachers. With the help of the "class parents," names of prospective teachers are secured each month from the church membership. These names are given to the chairman of the personnel committee, one of the committees of the Church Board of Christian Education. This list then becomes the basis for securing new teachers as they are needed.

Another helpful aid to better teaching has been the providing of babysitters for the teachers of the school who desire to attend training classes but find it difficult to do so because of small children in the home.

Last summer, the Council became interested in helping families to learn how to make use of recreation and interesting projects for the purpose of cementing the members of the family as a social unit. It therefore sent a family consisting of father, mother, and two children to a family camp sponsored by the Congregational Church at Pilgrim Haven, Mich. This camp not only provides a delightful vacation experience for a whole family, but an opportunity for church families to learn how to work and play together in a Christian atmosphere.

The Parents' Council has become very popular in the church and parents are asking to have a part in its work. There is a strong belief that a plan of procedure is being worked out which will be beneficial to the families of the church, and which will most certainly strengthen the work of the church school.

From Manchester

By CARL E. OLSON
Manchester, Conn.

THE WEEK of May 4-11 offers every congregation, and especially the church school, an opportunity for an emphasis that is always important and needed. This particular week is known the country over as *National Family Week,* with Protestants, Catholics, and Jews co-operating in its observance.

It is well that we remember that the family is a basic unit not only of society at large and of every community, but also of every Christian congregation. What happens in the circle of home and family life is of vital concern to the church, and is an area of responsibility where the church must constantly make its influence felt.

To the church school especially, here is a great challenge, for in its program of Christian education it is dealing not only with individuals, but with members of a family. Much that might be accomplished during the church school session on Sunday morning can be depreciated and even to a great extent undone during the remainder of the week by a home and family atmosphere that is inconsistent and out of harmony with Christian teachings. On the contrary, a Christ-centered family life in the home every day of the week will serve to enforce and strengthen the Sunday program of the church school.

In other words, the scope of responsibility of the church school must not terminate with its instruction of the children on Sunday morning, but must in every possible way reach into the home. It is there that family life centers, and it is there that the church must bear its witness for Christ. After all, a child is actually under the direct care of the church only a very short time each week. Much of the remaining time is spent either in the home, or at least under its guidance and care. Therefore, shaping the character of home and family life is of prime concern to the church school.

How can we use this *National Family Week* to advantage? Let me suggest some things that might be done, some of which we tried last year in our observance of this week:

1. Send a special letter to every

home, perhaps best under the signatures of both the pastor and church school superintendent, announcing *National Family Week,* and calling attention to its purpose of seeking to strengthen family life by strengthening the ties between the home and the church.

Demonstration

2. Include with the letter a copy of a suitable family devotions booklet especially designed for use by parents and children. "Pages of Power—Parents, Children, and God" was available for distribution last year.

3. As a part of the Sunday morning service, ask one of your families to demonstrate family devotions before the congregation, using the booklet distributed. This is a witness, and it will show *how* it is done.

4. Make Mother's Day or the opening Sunday of *National Family Week,* or both, "Family Sundays," when children are urged to sit with their parents. A religious picture or some other suitable gift might be presented to the largest family in attendance.

5. Plan a Parent-Teachers Night some evening during the week when especially the role of parents in the spiritual growth of the child could be stressed. Discuss how the church and home can better co-operate in their common task. Draw out from parents some of the problems they face in the home, and suggest possible solutions. A filmstrip on home and family life would be helpful.

6. Provide parents with a list of devotional literature that can be used in the home to develop Christian family life. Have samples on hand.

7. Church school teachers visiting in the homes of their pupils is always in order. Such a program of visitation could well be carried out during *National Family Week,* with perhaps a meeting of the teachers afterward to share experiences.

8. Often there are family problems that will not come out in group discussion. Perhaps a special invitation during *National Family Week* to parents, inviting them to come to the pastor for counsel and guidance in family relations, will prove helpful and rewarding.

These are only a few ideas of what might be done in your observance of *National Family Week.* Try at least some of them this

year. If this has been an annual observance in your church, you know its value, and will want to make it the best ever this year.

It is true that to the church every week is Family Week, when through prayer, planning, preparation and service, the church seeks to bring the Living Christ more fully into the circle of every family under its care, but a week particularly emphasizing and high-lighting this ministry certainly is in order, and can be fruitful.

Prepare for It

Plan to observe *National Family Week* in your church this year. Prepare for it. Pray for God's blessing. Use the materials provided for this week. Make it a meaningful and worth-while experience for your church school and the entire congregation.

"Many services formerly rendered by family groups to their members have been taken over by specialized agencies in the community. Often parents feel that what remains as their responsibility is not very important, at least not as important as other responsibilities they carry in business or social life. Here the church can interpret to them the Christian significance of the newer psychological insights. Parents are workers together with God in giving creative guidance to developing life. In their hands rests the spiritual destiny of persons, nations and races. The home has not very many responsibilities remaining, but those which it retains are among the most important on earth. To help families in living up to these responsibilities is a never-ending challenge to the Christian church."

From the leaflet, "*The Church's Opportunity in Family Education.*"

A Radiating Impulse

By AXEL V. BECKMAN
Cleveland, Ohio

AMONG the devices often used on national radio and television programs to provoke laughter is the mention of days and weeks that are being observed. While many of them sound humorous, the fact that more are proclaimed each year proves the value of this type of publicity.

Thus, Fire Prevention Week has become the avenue for making people aware of the cost of carelessness with fire. Safety Week has no doubt helped to retard the rise in the number of accidents. Independence Day, Arbor Day, and the rest all have their special significance and produce particular results, even though they may sometimes be lightly esteemed.

Special Observances

The Church also has its special observances. And although we decry the fact that so many people attend church only on special occasions, we know that the Holy Spirit has often been able to reach such persons at such times, bringing them to repentance and faith and a new and wonderful way of life.

At times people will object to the many emphases made in the Church. "Here they come with another cause," we hear them say. But we must never permit the wet blanket of indifference to hinder us from seeing the "possibilities unlimited" which such emphases afford.

Down to Cases

Perhaps *National Family Week* has never seemed too important to you. But it has tremendous possibilities, among them a very probable answer to the teacher's perennial problem of how to awaken a greater interest among the parents of his students. But let us get down to cases.

Disturbing Symptoms

We are continually being disturbed by the discovery of the increasing immorality and dishonesty of our day, the spreading problems of divorce, delinquency and crime, and the worsening picture of world unrest. That these are symptomatic of the fact that men have forgotten God is the opinion not only of the Church, but also of

such law enforcement officials as J. Edgar Hoover.

Church Teacher's Role

While strong agencies have been set up for dealing with each of these problems, the basic tragedy is that they have to arise at all. And here is where the church school teacher can play a tremendously important role.

We are all conscious of our limitations. And rather than appear to be meddling, we prefer to take comfort in the existence of the above-mentioned agencies. We doubt the value of anything we might be able to do.

Let the Ounce Bounce

The old saying that "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" has become trite in the minds of many. But if we are, potentially, the "ounces" in society, let us at least begin to exert the power that is ours by God's grace. When Jesus said that we, as His followers, should perform works even greater than His, I am sure He was thinking of the homely kind of influence that we, as teachers in the Church, can bring to bear upon our students and their families, rather than of the headline-getting work of agencies and institutions.

Some time ago Gahlen Drake quoted this Chinese proverb on his radio program: "If there is righteousness in the heart, there is beauty in the character; if there is beauty in the character, there is harmony in the home; if there is harmony in the home, there is order in the nation; if there is order in the nation, there is peace in the world."

Foundation of Society

Notice how the national and world situations depend upon the individual and the family. We have long known that the family is the foundation of society. And we are scripturally correct in this, for when God made His promises to Abraham and Jacob in the Book of Genesis, He expressed it in two ways. At one time He said, "In thy seed shall all of the nations of the earth be blessed." And again, "In thy seed shall all of the families of the earth be blessed."

While we are primarily interested in the individual souls of the students entrusted to us, we are not meeting our full responsibility if we permit ourselves to remain ignorant of their home situations. I do not mean that we should become self-appointed social workers. But the love we have

for our students, and without that love we should never be teaching, should motivate us to follow them right into their homes, in actuality as well as in our thoughts and prayers.

Here is where *National Family Week* can enter the picture in a wonderful way. While the pastor will no doubt deal with the family in his sermons on Mother's Day and the Sunday preceding it, we cannot permit that to be the only emphasis that is made. With the nationwide publicity and the literature that is available, a marvelous opportunity is afforded whereby the teacher can reach into the home in an intensely personal way.

Most Interesting Subject

There are many ways of doing this. For example, each teacher can visit the homes of his students, bringing the tracts and other literature in person, and chatting a bit about Christian life in the home. If this sounds difficult, remember that there is no subject about which a parent is more eager to talk than about his own child! Once the ice has been broken, it is easy, with the help of the literature, to introduce the thought of family devotions and to suggest ways in which the parent can help the student in the completion of his homework.

Program for Parents

Perhaps the teachers, as a group, would prefer to sponsor a program for the parents. Demonstrations could then be given of how family devotions might be conducted and how other Christian interests can be shared in the home. This should not be done, of course, to the exclusion of home visitation at some time during the year.

May God help us to avoid the enervating effect of considering our influence too lightly! Let us remember that even as a small pebble dropped into a pool of water radiates its influence to the entire pool, so the simplest kind of Christian witness brought into the home can prove to be not only the "ounce of prevention," destroying evil at its very source, but also the impulse which produces "righteousness in the heart."

"Good works do not make a good man, but a good man does good works, just as the good tree alone is able to bring forth good fruit."
LUTHER

First Time—Great Time

By ELAINE E. GONSKE
Superintendent, Sunday School, Rice Lake, Wis.

LAST YEAR our congregation observed *National Family Week* for the first time. Our plans developed as a result of a survey in our Sunday school. Through our classes, a survey was made to find out how many of our homes had family altars. We were astonished at the result. We realized that here was the place where both the home and the Sunday school needed to be strengthened. This is how we observed *National Family Week*.

A week before *National Family Week* began, letters were sent to the membership of the congregation preparing them for its observance and encouraging them to begin a family altar.

Sunday, May 6, was Mission Sunday in our Sunday school. Each teacher presented to her class the need for reading the Word of God in our homes. During the Mission period we saw the need of beginning our Mission work in the home. Simple tracts on "Reading God's Word" were given to the children at the close of the hour.

At the morning worship the family altar was stressed, and the devotional reading, "Pages of Power," put out by the Division of Christian Education, was given to each family.

On Monday, a display of devotional material was placed in a large store window downtown. Charts, pictures, and devotional books were used. The theme for *National Family Week:* PARENTS, CHILDREN, GOD, was used. As people stopped to look at the display, this message met their eyes: "A Family Altar will alter many a family." Through this display we were able to reach not only our own congregation, but our whole community as well.

"I Am with You"

On Tuesday evening the Young People's and Women's Mission Societies gave a program with the emphasis on missions. The film, "I Am with You," was shown. This program worked in very well with our emphasis on the family. When we, as a family, receive good things from God, we want to share them with others. Such

opportunity was given to us through the offering, which went for the support of one of our missionaries in Africa.

In the Sunday school hour the following Sunday, the children shared things they had done in their homes around the family altar. They, too, were becoming more conscious of the need of approaching the Throne of Grace together, as a family. At the close of the divine worship, the tract, "Ten Reasons for a Family Altar," by W. E. Beiderwolf, was given out.

Luther League

The week was climaxed with a Luther League Family Night on Sunday evening. Upon arriving at the church, each member was given a name tag in the shape of a coat of arms, with his family name on it. A different color was used for each family. Parents were to use these name tags later when lunch was to be served. Each family was to eat together in a group. Parents, young people, and children took part in the evening's fun.

The devotional part of the evening began with a hymn. One of the fathers read the Scripture and led in prayer. Musical numbers were given by some of the teenagers and the children. The filmstrip, "God in Our Home," was shown with the aid of the two 78-rpm recordings. Following the filmstrip, our pastor gave a brief talk on the need of the home altar.

Our social hour was family fun. Games and quizzes included every member of the family. The high light of this hour was the selecting of a "National Family Baby" from a group of eight young people. They had volunteered, not knowing what was in store for them. They were dressed up and given various things to do which helped the group decide which one should be the winner. A large ribbon labeled, "National Family Baby," was pinned on the winner.

Certificates of Honor

Certificates of honor were given out to the oldest and youngest persons present, the one coming the longest distance, the oldest married couple, and the most recently married couple. The social hour closed with refreshments. Everyone had a good time and seemed to realize that the family as a group could have a good time together. So often today, each member of the family goes his or her own way.

This year we would like to make more of a personal effort to

get into each home and help to establish family altars. This could be done through a committee or our Sunday school teachers. We would like to strive for a family altar in every home. How that would glorify God!

As we tried to evaluate the results of *National Family Week,* we found that so many were intangible. They were things that could not be measured. First, *National Family Week* did leave an impression, an impression, perhaps, most of all on those of us who worked out the plans. All became aware of a great need. Second, many responded with a desire for more devotional material. Third, families became aware that God wants a prominent place in their homes.

Is *National Family Week* worth observing? We believe that it is, for it has been the means of opening our eyes to the need of improving our Christian family life. We need to let God become a power in our homes, and the answer to all our problems.

"If it is good for each and every member of a family to go to church regularly, let them go together, let them sit together as they do at home for meals and for worship, not each in a different part of God's house. It is a heart-warming picture for the pastor and congregation when parents and children enter and worship together in the house of the Lord. . . . Another benefit of the family worshiping together as a family is that children, who are great imitators, learn to take part in the service instead of sitting and staring or scribbling in the hymnbooks. Of course the parents must give the proper example by taking part in the service, in the hymns and prayers and responses."

From the magazine, *"The Christian Parent."*

Family Day

By CLARENCE T. NELSON
Pastor, Augustana Lutheran Church, Washington, D. C.

AUGUSTANA CHURCH, Washington, D. C., has been glad for the "new look" in the celebration of Mother's Day which puts the emphasis on the Christian home and dedicates the week beginning with the previous Sunday to the family.

In keeping with suggestions furnished by our parish education department, we have introduced that week by a rally of parents and teachers and children. We feel that it has kept the celebration of Mother's Day from going off the deep end of a sentimental orgy. Mother should have her day, but instead of empty encomiums we want it to measure up to Paul's rule, "Let all things be done unto edifying." 1 Corinthians 14:26.

Pages of Power

Accordingly, weeks ahead, and following the receipt of the packet of suggestions from headquarters, a committee from the Church School staff meets to lay plans. Materials are looked over and leaflets are ordered. Last year, we examined "Pages of Power," and ordered it for distribution. This little booklet contained suggestions for use of the home as a means of Christian growth. Through conversation, worship, and study, it aimed to bring God and neighbor into the horizon of the home. Worship is a group experience, and children and young people should be encouraged to make their contribution. It is an invitation to a spiritual adventure for the family. We also ordered a Mother's Day bulletin with the Christian family theme emphasis.

The program committee went to work. It had instructions to prepare a double-barreled program, since the children would have their own program following the joint introductory part. This is what they came up with:

The superintendent was the master of ceremonies.

For devotions a typical family was selected to share its evening devotions in a home setting. Music was contributed by a mother-daughter combination.

An informal roll call of classes with their teachers and parents was next. By informal roll call

we mean that twins were pointed out, boys with the "mostest" freckles, the largest family, longest travelers, buttons for perfect attendance pointed out, etc.

Brief Program

Following the separation of children and adults, a film, "Rolling Stones" by Family Films, was shown to the adults. This proved to be an excellent portrayal of the problem of uprooted families that had its special application to our families in the nation's capital. A previous year we used the filmstrip and platters, "At Home with God" by the American Lutheran Church, which had such a splendid emphasis on the family altar. The children were shown comics and a Bible story film, and had a happy sing period.

We also arranged an excellent display of religious books for children and guide books for parents.

The program was purposely made brief to afford ample opportunity to get parents and teachers together. A buffet supper concluded the experience. The turnout was exceptional and the interest evoked indicated we had struck a responsive chord in our parents' hearts.

We feel that our publicity committee effectively pointed up the event, and the rousing success of our Family Night put a feather in their cap.

Following is the letter sent out in which "Pages of Power" was enclosed:

Dear Parents:

The week of May 6 is National Family Week, culminating in Mother's Day on Sunday, May 13. This week should be a time when we rethink those Christian values of family life. A time when we reconsecrate our home and our whole being to Christ, and renew the covenant between ourselves and our Lord that ours shall be a Christian home with Christ permeating its every fiber.

What could be more appropriate than to usher in this National Family Week with your family worshiping in the family pew next Sunday at the 11 A.M. service and attending the Festival of the Christian Home to be held on Sunday evening, May 6?

The Festival of the Christian Home is under the sponsorship of the Church School. You are urged to attend with your children. There will be a light supper served at 6 P.M. followed by a special Family Service at 6:45 P.M. During a portion of this service the children will have a separate program which has been planned especially for them. This is the night for the whole family, and so we urge you to attend as a

family including, of course, the babes in arms since special provision has been made for them also.

Enclosed is a tract "Pages of Power." It provides devotional readings for each day of National Family Week. If you do not now have a family altar this booklet provides an excellent foundation for its beginning.

Yours in Christ,
Signed: (The Superintendent)

Publicity

Attractive posters were prepared showing a family group starting for church, and headlining the features and date. They were displayed at both church entrances a couple of Sundays previous to Mother's Day.

Then the pastor highlighted the observance in the bulletin starting a month before, under the caption, "Around the Corner." On the Sunday itself a specially boxed announcement put the whole congregation on notice that Family Night was very special, and anyone who missed this salute to National Family Week would regret it.

The late Dr. Walter Maier, noted Lutheran radio preacher, hit the nail on the head when he said: "If I could paint a canvass to picture Christ exerting His deepest influence and bestowing His richest blessing upon America, He would be portrayed not at the Capitol directing our legislators; not in the dignified chambers of the Supreme Court counseling with nine men whose decisions shape our destiny; certainly not at the head of our army and navy, nor in the conclave of scientists, raising His hand in benediction on our schools. Instead I would depict the vast panorama of American homes welcoming the divine Christ to their hearth and to their hearts."

Let us magnify the Christian home!

If you ask this parson for his frank appraisal, he would like to lead in a rousing "Hosanna" to Family Night. (Interpreters have said this means a Holy Hurrah.) We welcome every means offered to link our church school to the home. A fellow minister used the ancient proverb: "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are on edge," Ezekiel 18:2, in the arresting sermon topic, "Are Parents in the Way?"

He cited two incidents in Jesus' experience to point up his question. When in the temple Jesus asked, "How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Again, one

day when Jesus was working with feverish intensity, taking neither time to eat nor sleep, his mother and brothers sought to restrain him. Are parents in the way? They do not mean to be, but how shall they do better unless the church school shows a better way?

Ideals for the Christian Parents

We desire to build our home on love, self-forgetful and God centered.

We desire to grow in fellowship with God, and to share that fellowship with our children.

We desire to take our part, and to encourage our children to take theirs, in the life of the Church, that the message of Christ may come to our generation with sincerity and strength.

We desire to be honest in our dealings with each other, our children, and all people.

We desire to seek counsel from persons and books on problems that are beyond our ability to solve.

We desire to cultivate for ourselves and our children friendships with all sorts and conditions of men, knowing that only in this way can God's family come true.

We desire to think and act courageously in all moral situations, and to help our children make habitual for themselves Christian ways of living.

We desire to play our full part in the bringing in of God's Kingdom and the doing of His will in the world, and to help our children to share in this work as their rightful heritage.

We desire to encourage in our children the fullest development of their personalities that each may be the best he can be, unlimited by our preconceived ambitions.

Contributed by Dr. Clifford Ansgar Nelson

News and Views

By JOHN HILTNER
Waverly, Iowa

Back to Sunday School!

From a "concerned Sunday school superintendent" comes this plea: "Can't we start a movement to bring our Lutheran adults back to Sunday school?"

"I grew up in a Lutheran church that did not have a lasting adult Bible class, and I felt that I missed much in my Christian life. Thank God we now have an adult Bible class," says Mrs. Earl E. Smith, Alta, Iowa. But she feels that much has to be done yet. Adults will never live the Word, unless the Word is taught. Pastors and people must be awakened to the need for more Bible study. "Establish Bible classes! Encourage the people to come! Give them the Word, Christ, His Cross, His love!" Let us bring our Lutheran adults back to Sunday school!

A Real Dilemma

Members of the Sunday school staff of First Church, Hammond, Ind., decided that Pastor Paul Renz, already busy with two services Sunday mornings, should not have to teach the adult Bible class, too. The decision had hardly been reached before a layman asked, "Where can the pastor go, though? His study is being used as a classroom. The only thing available is the small boiler room, or a smaller janitor's closet." Latest word from Hammond: "Pastor is still teaching. There is no place for him to go!" *The Lutheran,* Dec. 19, 1951.

Pennsylvania's Oldest Sunday School Teacher

Mr. Elias R. Reitz, who was 94 years old on January 19, has been a member of the teaching staff of Grace Church, Mt. Carmel, Pa., for the last 46 years. The Pennsylvania State Sunday School Association recognized the services of Mr. Reitz with a medal.

Sunday School in a Playhouse

In the southeastern part of Erie, Pa., there were 2,500 homes with 7,000 people living in this booming section of the city, but no church to serve them. Last fall a congregation was organized. There was no hall or school building

available for services. Then one family opened the basement of their home to be used as a little chapel, and two families came forward to offer space in their homes to house part of the Sunday school. The tots of the Nursery Department found congenial quarters in a tiny playhouse. *The Lutheran,* December 12, 1951, brings pictures of the basement church and the playhouse Sunday school.

Where there is a will . . .

J. Edgar Hoover Speaks

The famous director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation wrote a highly interesting article in *The Sunday School Times.* The title of the article is "The Sunday School —Key to Tomorrow." He tells of the experience of one juvenile court judge, who over a period of eight years had some 8,000 boys and girls under 17 years of age brought before him for violating the law. Of these 8,000 delinquent children only 42 regularly attended Sunday school. Perhaps even more striking is his finding that none of these children had a father or mother who attended Sunday school or church regularly.

Mr. Hoover concludes his article with the statement that only the banners of Christ can lead the way to the moral and spiritual rebirth of our great nation. In the forefront of His banner-bearers are the Sunday schools, he says.

Copies of this article may be obtained from the Sunday School Times Co., 325 North 13th Street, Philadelphia 5, Pa.

"The Christian home and the church have a common cause and mission, and they need each other. Both are founded on love. Both are concerned with the Christian education of the child in order that a Christlike personality may be achieved . . . . Together they seek to develop each child to his fullest spiritual capacities. Together they work in a common process centering in the religious growth of the young."

From the leaflet, *"Co-operation Between Church and Home."*

BOOKS

Growth in Grace, by William M. Horn. Muhlenberg Press. 65 cents.

For adult confirmation work Rev. William M. Horn has produced a 127-page booklet, *Growth in Grace.* Pastors who have been looking for a small and inexpensive book to place in the hands of older young people and adults who are to be received into church membership, might consider this instruction manual. Rev. Horn served for fourteen years as a pastor in a congregation. He has just recently come to the Board of Editors of the Parish and Church School Board of the United Lutheran Church in America.

Flexible

Pastor Horn in his book has kept in mind that the methods followed by different churches in preparation for church membership vary. The book can be used as supplementary reading. It has twelve chapters and can be used as a study textbook for a three, four, six or twelve session class plan. Each chapter is followed by suggested Bible study and a series of pointed thoughts for discussion. Also included as a separate section is the Small Catechism. A whole page of additional books to consider is presented to the student at the end of the book. Audio-visual resources for each lesson are suggested.

The contents are indicated by chapter headings such as: The Church; The Bible, God and Human Sin; The Divine Redeemer; The Sacraments; The Stewardship of Life; Evangelism and Missions; Prayer; Lutheran Worship; The Lutheran Church in America; The Congregation at Work; Lutherans, Roman Catholics, Other Protestants. I have just finished an adult class in which this book, *Growth in Grace* has been used. On the basis of the co-operation received and results obtained I can recommend this study manual to pastors for consideration in their adult confirmation program.

M. L. Raymond

Learning the Way and *Teaching the Way,* by Donald F. Irvin. Muhlenberg Press. $1.50 each.

In preparation and field tested for the past three years has been

the new student and teacher confirmation class books by Rev. Donald F. Irvin, *Learning the Way* and *Teaching the Way*. It is the intention of the author that the pupil in confirmation class need have only this one book of 208 pages and a Bible. Catechism, Bible History, Church History, Worship, and Stewardship are all worked together into each lesson. In addition the usual work book, study book and Catechism in presentations like this are all combined in one book. *Learning the Way* is different from any other catechetical course you may have ever used. It is based on the best educational procedures known today. The Dale-Chall readability formulas were used to keep the vocabulary within the comprehension of pupils of the seventh grade.

The course is arranged in six units of twenty-seven lessons, prefaced by a "Getting Acquainted" session. The six units are: Introductory; The Ten Commandments; The Apostles' Creed; The Lord's Prayer; The Sacraments; Responsibilities of a Confirmed Member.

A perforated Guide Sheet for home preparation is included with each lesson. At the end of each unit is a check Test Sheet. Daily Bible Readings are suggested. Each lesson contains a vocabulary list of words that are used in connection with the church and our faith. Most quotations from the New Testament are taken from the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament.

Similarity to Nolde

Those who have used Nolde's *Study Helps in the Catechism* will discover some similarity in Irvin's *Learning the Way*. But Irvin's unit on the Apostles' Creed is much stronger with some very fine lessons on "I Believe That Jesus Christ Is My Lord." Irvin also follows the usual order of presenting the various parts of the Catechism.

The companion volume, *Teaching the Way,* suggests teaching procedures as well as indicating adaptations and changes that can be made to meet the local situation.

M. L. Raymond

Come and See

By ELLEN BRADSHAW
National Kindergarten Association

WHEN I left the highway and turned into the cinder lane leading back to the cottage where Eleanor Matterson and her small son were spending the summer, I wondered what they would be doing this time. They were always doing something interesting.

Awkward Bugs

There was no one on the porch. The swing and rocker under the apple tree were vacant. I heard nothing and was about to go down to the river where they often fished when a peal of laughter that was unmistakably Billy's rang out.

"They take it away from each other!"

"Clumsy things," laughed his mother.

The voices came from behind the hedge, and when I came into the gateway I almost stepped upon Billy. His mother and he were both on the ground watching the maneuvers of a pair of tumblebugs!

Billy moved over and I sat down to take my nature lesson with him. The desperate haste of the awkward bugs going inefficiently "somewhere" was drolly fascinating. One wondered how far they had come with their precious burden and how much farther they must go on this hard, dry ground to find a suitable storage place for it.

"Who discovered them?" I asked.

"Mother did," answered Billy. "I was looking at my new book when she told me to come and see something!"

Mother Magic

I at once pictured Eleanor, as I had watched her at other times, finding Billy and giving him the magic "Come and see" that brought the light of adventure to his eyes. It might be a new flower, a bird's nest, a sunset, or even the pouring of soda into sour milk that elicited the call, but it was always something to be studied and enjoyed together.

Mother Readiness

There came to mind, too, Eleanor's readiness to drop her work or pastime whenever Billy, full of

mystery, came catching at her hand with, "Mother! Come and see something!"

By-products

If Eleanor never does anything else, I often tell myself, this one unconscious habit of hers will insure Billy's being her pal for life—just this one thing.

I thought, also, of the by-products: keen observation, nature lore and scientific or artistic contemplation and the development of orderliness in reasoning. Indeed, a dozen good outcomes result, yet it is just Eleanor's way, and, surely, with very little conscious effort it could become any mother's or father's way.

Comradeship

Billy is a strong-willed child, and when he was two years old it was predicted that he would give his parents a great deal of trouble during his boyhood. But, on the contrary, it is seldom indeed that there is a particle of friction. I believe it is due to the happy comradeship, which has grown out of the system, "Come and see," sharing experiences. His mother constantly notes the little things that will interest a boy, and Billy brings all his important interests to her. His father has the same faculty of going right along with him when they are together.

The parent or teacher who poses as a model or holds himself aloof in his experiences with life, purposefully creating an impression of superiority in the desire for a child's respect, loses the opportunity to gain that respect, and, instead drives the child from him. The parent or teacher who learns to bridge the mental distance between a child and himself finds the child looking up to him adoringly. It is the hand-in-hand attitude of "Come with me and see" that succeeds.

A Parent's Prayer

Almighty God, heavenly Father, who hast blessed us with the joy and care of children; give us light and strength so to train them, that they may love whatsoever things are true and pure and lovely and of good report, following the example of their Saviour Jesus Christ. AMEN.

Contributed by DR. CLIFFORD ANSGAR NELSON